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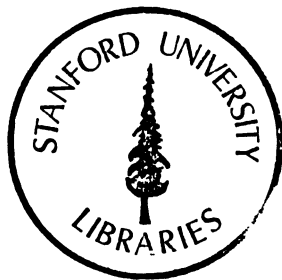
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A  
L E T T E R  
TO THE  
GOVERNORS, LEGISLATURES,  
AND  
PROPRIETORS OF PLANTATIONS,  
IN  
THE BRITISH WEST-INDIA ISLANDS.

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BY THE RIGHT REVEREND  
BEILBY PORTEUS, D.D.  
BISHOP OF LONDON.

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TO THE  
*Governors, Legislatures, & Proprietors of Plantations  
in the British West-India Islands.*

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GENTLEMEN,

THE official connexion which I have with the British West-India Islands, and the Ecclesiastical superintendence which to a certain degree my predecessors and myself have for a considerable length of time exercised over them, has always given me a lively interest in their spiritual welfare, and an earnest desire and endeavour to promote it, as far as the vast distance between those islands and this country would admit. But among the various classes of their inhabitants, my attention has been more particularly directed to that which is by far the most numerous of them all, and constitutes the great mass of people in all our islands; I mean the Negro Slaves employed in the cultivation of the lands possessed by the West-India Planters, whether resident on their plantations or in this kingdom. On these

my thoughts have been anxiously employed for upwards of twenty years, and I have omitted no convenient opportunity of publicly expressing my sentiments concerning their situation, the necessity of improving it, and the mode in which that melioration of their condition might and ought to be carried into effect. Almost immediately after my appointment to the see of London, I addressed a Letter to the Planters and Proprietors in the islands, intreating them to pay a little more regard to their Negro Slaves than they had hitherto done; and more particularly to make some better provision for their instruction in the principles of morality and religion. Some years after this, I had the good fortune to recover, by a Chancery suit, an estate in Yorkshire, belonging to WILLIAM AND MARY COLLEGE IN VIRGINIA, which had been bequeathed to it by the great Mr. Boyle, for *the advance or propagation of the Christian religion among Infidels*; a purpose which had been attempted, but had completely failed. Having therefore obtained a decree in my favour, I was called upon by the Court of Chancery, as one of the trustees of that charity, to propose some other charitable institution in the room of Mr. Boyle's, but approaching as near as possible to his original idea. Accordingly, after very mature consideration, I recommended an establishment for the *conversion and*

*religious*

*religious instruction and education of the Negro Slaves in the British West-India Islands*, as being in itself an object of the greatest utility and importance, and perfectly conformable to Mr. Boyle's pious and benevolent intentions of imparting the blessings of Christianity to Heathens inhabiting his Majesty's dominions. The proposal was approved by the Lord Chancellor Thurlow, a society for the purpose was formed, a royal charter obtained for its incorporation, and the Bishop of London for the time being was appointed the President of it. This society has accordingly from that time to the present been exerting its best endeavours to promote the great ends of its institution, and has sent out several missionaries to different islands in the West Indies, who have made some progress in their respective missions. But the scanty revenues of the society, the extreme difficulty of finding a sufficient number of clergymen properly qualified for so laborious and arduous a task, the various discouragements and obstacles they met with in the execution of their office, and the vast disproportion of their means of instruction to the immense numbers to be instructed, have hitherto confined the good effects of their labours within a narrow compass, and rendered a more extensive plan, a more liberal establishment, more effectual aid and encouragement, indispensably necessary to the accomplish-

ment of the great object in view. It is to obtain this aid and this encouragement, that I now take the liberty of once more addressing you, Gentlemen, on this very interesting subject; and from an event of the highest importance which has recently taken place, I am led to hope that the present moment is peculiarly favourable to my application to you on this occasion, and can scarce fail of rendering it completely successful.

You will easily imagine that the event I allude to is the abolition of the Slave Trade to the coast of Africa by the legislature of Great Britain. I do not at all mean to enter here into the merits of that great question. It is now decided by a vast majority of both Houses of Parliament, and is become a law of the land, which we are all bound to obey. I hope and trust that every acrimonious sentiment, which was felt by the contending parties in that long and painful conflict, is already, or will be very soon completely extinguished, and the most perfect harmony and good understanding re-established between the islands and the mother-country. The only reason of my introducing the mention of the subject here is to point out how forcibly it bears upon the proposition I have now to lay before you, and what a powerful additional argument it furnishes in favour of carrying immediately into effect that most important measure.

By

By the Act of Parliament which has passed, prohibiting any further importation of Negro Slaves from the coast of Africa, you have now evidently no other resource left, for keeping up a stock of slaves sufficient for the cultivation of your lands, but the natural increase of the Negroes at this time in the islands. Your great object, therefore, must of course be to promote and encourage this increase by every means in your power. Now of these means, the most practicable and most effectual, beyond all controversy, will be the very expedient here proposed; namely, **THE CAREFUL AND ASSIDUOUS INSTRUCTION OF YOUR SLAVES, BOTH CHILDREN AND ADULTS, IN THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, AND A STRICT ATTENTION TO THE REGULATION OF THEIR MORAL CONDUCT.** This may perhaps appear at the first view a strange assertion, but it is nevertheless perfectly true, and capable of the strictest proof, from the most authentic documents transmitted from the islands themselves to this Government.

These documents are to be found principally in that large and valuable body of evidence, **THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVY COUNCIL,** appointed in the year 1788 to examine into the nature of the Slave Trade. In them you will find it asserted, by a great number of most respectable West-India Proprietors, and in a variety of official letters

letters and papers laid by them before the Committee, that one of the greatest and most fatal obstructions to the natural increase of the Negro Slaves in the British Islands, is *the promiscuous and unbounded illicit commerce of the two sexes*, in which the Negro Slaves are permitted to indulge themselves without any check or restraint. This is a fact universally admitted ; and it is equally admitted, that unless an effectual stop is put to this licentiousness of manners, *the increase of the native Negroes by births* will never be sufficient to keep up that stock of Negroes which the cultivation of the islands requires. This obstacle, then, must in some way or other be removed ; and in what way can this be most effectually done ?

Penal laws may certainly be enacted by the colonial legislatures, prohibiting illicit connections among the Negroes, and requiring them to be united by legal matrimony to one wife. But human laws, it is to be feared, will be but a feeble barrier to the ardent and impetuous passions of an African constitution, and very incompetent to contend with the strength of inveterate and long indulged habits of vice.

These can only be subdued by *moral restraints*, by new principles infused into the mind, by the powerful influences of divine grace, by the fear of God, and the dread of future punishment,  
strongly

strongly and early impressed upon the soul. These are the only incentives that can prevail upon your Negro Slaves to submit to the restraint of having only one wife ; and as this restraint is *indispensably necessary* to that increase of their numbers by birth which the cultivation of your plantations demands, it is most evidently your interest, as well as your duty, to render your Slaves not merely *nominal* but *real* Christians, in order to obtain a sufficient supply of labourers, and to prevent the total ruin of your plantations, or at least a great diminution of their produce.

It is on this ground that you find so many of the most eminent West-India Planters, in their examination before the Privy Council above-mentioned, recommending in the strongest terms the instruction of the Negroes in the rudiments of morality and religion ; it is on this ground that it was so strongly enforced by his Majesty's Secretary of State, in his letter to the West-India Governors, in the year 1797 ; and it is on this ground, that the Planters in the Island of Antigua give such countenance and encouragement to the Moravian missionaries in that island, who have (as I have been informed) converted there at least 10,000 Slaves to the Christian religion.

Taking it then for granted that you will be influenced by these considerations, to bestow the  
 blessings



blessings of Christianity on your Slaves, and the benefits of it (even in a temporal point of view) upon yourselves, I shall proceed to consider in what way and by what means this most desirable object may be most easily and most effectually accomplished.

Hitherto, the only mode pursued for converting Pagan nations to the Christian faith, has been by sending missionaries among them, to shew them the falsehood and gross errors of their own religion, and to instruct them in the divine truths of the Gospel, and the duties which it requires of them. This mode has been more particularly adopted from very early times by the Church of Rome, which has a regular college instituted for that purpose, generally known by the name of the *Propaganda Society*, of which the Jesuits were for many years the chief directors and most active members, whose laborious missions to China, to India, to South America, and various other parts of the world, have long been in the hands of the public. They were attended for many years with considerable success; but since the extinction of that order, the zeal and ardour of the *Propaganda Society* has greatly abated, and we hear nothing now of their great success in converting Heathen nations to Christianity, though they are still, I fear, sufficiently active in proselyting individual protestants wherever they can.

Among

Among other religious communities, they who have most distinguished themselves in the business of conversion, are the *Moravians*, or, as they call themselves, the *United Brethren*.

These indeed have shewn a degree of zeal, of vigour, of perseverance, of an unconquerable spirit, and firmness of mind, which no dangers, no difficulties could subdue (combined at the same time with the greatest gentleness, prudence, and moderation), and of which no example can be found since the first primitive ages of Christianity. They have penetrated into the remotest regions of the globe, have sown the seeds of Christianity among the most savage and barbarous nations, from Labradore, Lapland, and Greenland on the north, to the Cape of Good Hope on the south, and have been (as I have already observed) particularly successful in the conversion of the Negro Slaves in several of the West-India islands, more especially that of Antigua. But with the exception of these most meritorious labourers in the vineyard, not much has been done by the protestant churches of Europe, in the business of foreign missions. A few have been sent out by the Danes, Germans, and English, principally to the East Indies, where some converts were made, more particularly by the pious and truly apostolic SCHWARTZ, who executed his mission with such fidelity, earnestness, discretion, and indefatigable

perseverance, as gained him the entire confidence and affections of the natives, gave him an unbounded influence over them in their temporal as well as religious concerns, rendered his name for ever dear and sacred to their hearts, impressed them with the highest veneration for that divine religion which could produce such an exalted character, and shewed the world what might be done by an ardent and active zeal for the advancement of religion, united with mildness of disposition, with a natural urbanity of manners, and with the most perfect simplicity, sincerity, and integrity of mind.

If two or three hundred such missionaries could be found, and sent to the East and West Indies, I should not at all despair of an almost entire conversion of the Hindoos in the one, and the Negro Slaves in the other. But, alas, such characters as that of SCHWARTZ are too thinly scattered over the world, to flatter us with the hopes of such a number of them being ever collected together for such a purpose. Indeed it is now become (as I find by experience) so extremely difficult to find out clergymen of character disposed to undertake foreign missions, and properly qualified for the due discharge of them, that it is indispensably necessary to have recourse to other means of converting and instructing the Negro Slaves in our islands, than those which have hitherto

hitherto been made use of. Now that which I have to propose to your consideration, is one which, though gradual in its operation, will, if carried effectually into execution, be infallible in its result.

It is, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS IN EVERY PARISH OF THE WEST-INDIA ISLANDS, one or more in each parish, as the extent of the parish and the number of Negroes in it may require; these schools to be formed on the plan originally sketched out by DR. BELL, first established by him at Madras, and since transferred by him in an improved state to this country, where they are beginning to produce the most salutary effects. The peculiar nature, the supereminent advantages, and the extensive and beneficial effects which have been already produced by them, both in the East Indies and in this country, you will find fully explained in the appendix or postscript to this letter. After reading that, which I earnestly recommend to your most serious consideration, you will not, I trust, have any hesitation in applying it to the use of your own Negroes. And if, for the reasons above adduced, you should be of opinion (and I do not see how it is possible for you not to entertain that opinion) that the religious education and instruction of your young Negroes is essentially necessary to restrain them from the most fatal excesses in the indulgence of their sensual appetites; and that

such restraint is equally necessary to keep up a constant supply of home-born Slaves for the cultivation of your lands; you will perceive that these important purposes can in no other way be so easily, so effectually, and so expeditiously obtained, as by the adoption of the schools here proposed.

Assuming, then, that you are resolved upon the measure, the next consideration is, how are sufficient funds to be provided for carrying it into effect? Now I apprehend that in this there will be very little difficulty, as one great excellence of Dr. Bell's plan is, that it is attended with but a very trifling expence. To defray this expence, I would propose,

1. That a general subscription should be set on foot in this country, which I am persuaded would be an extensive and a liberal one. In my own diocese, and particularly in the opulent cities of London and Westminster, I would exert my utmost influence to promote it, and would myself begin it with the sum of £.500.; and if the occasion called for it, would at any time be ready to double that sum.

2. I can entertain no doubt but that the British legislature, which has already manifested so laudable a concern for the *temporal* happiness of the Negroes, will not be indifferent to their *spiritual* welfare, nor refuse their assistance in promoting it, by encouraging the establishment of these parochial schools.

3. The

3. *The Society for the Conversion and religious Instruction and Education of the Negro Slaves in the British West-India Islands* (of which I have the honour to be President) have I think the power, and would not, I am confident, want the inclination to contribute some share of their moderate revenue towards forwarding the plan proposed; as one part of their institution is *the education of the young Negroes*, and they are allowed by their charter to send out *schoolmasters* to the islands, as well as missionaries.

4. Lastly. If these funds should not prove sufficient, a very small parochial rate might be raised on the Proprietors of lands in every island, to which (as they are to reap all the benefits of the institution, in the increase of their native Negroes, and will consequently save all the enormous sums formerly expended in the importation of fresh Slaves from Africa) they cannot, I think, reasonably object.

These are the sources which will, I doubt not, furnish an abundant supply for the support of the establishment here proposed; and the Planters will in a few years, *at a very trivial expence*\* to the Proprietor, raise up a race of young Christian Negroes, who will amply repay their kindness by the increase of their population, by their fidelity, their industry, their honesty, their sobriety, their

\* See the Appendix.

humility,

humility, submission, and obedience to their masters ; all which virtues are most strictly enjoined, under pain of eternal punishment, by that divine religion in which they will have been educated, and render them far superior to their unconverted fellow-labourers. This is not merely assertion and speculation. It is proved by *fact* and by *experience* ; by the conduct of the Slaves who have been converted from Paganism and instructed in the Christian religion by the Moravian missionaries in the English and Danish islands, where the number of converted Negroes amounts to upwards of 24,000 ; who so far excel the *unconverted* Negroes, in the conscientious discharge of all the duties attached to their humble station, that they are held by the Planters in the highest estimation, and are purchased at a higher price than their Heathen brethren.

I cannot therefore help flattering myself that you will, without hesitation, adopt this benevolent system. It may be tried at first in one parish in any of the islands, and if it should succeed in that (of which there can be no doubt) it will of course encourage you to extend it gradually through every parish in every British island. The first step must be to provide for each parish a proper schoolmaster, well instructed in Dr. Bell's mode of education, who will be easily obtained on very moderate terms from this country ; and the next,

to erect one or two cheap wooden buildings, of dimensions sufficient to contain all the Negro children of the parish, and which may not only serve as a school room for *them*, but also as a place of worship on Sundays, both for the children and the adult Negroes who are desirous to attend divine service : for *some care* must also be taken of these last, while the education of their children is going on. The schoolmasters therefore may be empowered to require *their* attendance in the school room on Sundays, as well as that of their children, and the clergyman of the parish in which they reside will probably have the goodness to add his influence and exhortations for the same important purpose ; and also to prepare a short form of public prayers for them, consisting of a certain number of the best Collects of the Liturgy, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, together with select portions of Scripture, taken principally from the Psalms and Proverbs, the Gospels, and the plainest and most practical parts of the Epistles, particularly those which relate to the duties of slaves towards their masters. The schoolmaster also may be directed to read to them a plain, useful discourse, selected from some of our English printed sermons, or from the abridgment of Bishop Wilson's Instructions for the Indians, or from Mr. Duke's Lectures to the Negroes, and  
other



Other publications of the same nature, *to be chosen by the rector of the parish*, under whose superintendence the parochial schools must wholly be placed.

By these means the *adults*, as well as the Negro children, will enjoy the advantage of religious instruction. But then, that they may have sufficient time for receiving it, it will be necessary to indulge them with the *whole of the Sunday* for that purpose. It will be said, perhaps, that they are already so indulged; for on Sunday they are released from all labour on the plantations: it is considered as *their own day*, and they employ it in any way they think fit. This is very true; but there are two most unfortunate circumstances which prevent the Sabbath from being to them what it was, by its original institution, intended to be to the whole human race (whatever their condition or *complexion* might be), A DAY OF REST FROM LABOUR, AND A DAY DEDICATED TO THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD.

The first of these circumstances is, THE WANT OF A DAY, OR PART OF A DAY IN EVERY WEEK, FOR THE CULTIVATION OF THEIR OWN LITTLE PATCHES OF LAND; which want renders it necessary for them to employ a part of the Sunday for that purpose. The other is, the PUBLIC MARKET which is allowed to be held on Sundays, where the Negroes go to dispose of the produce of their lands, their poultry, fruit, and vegetables, and where they

commonly spend the remainder of the day in festivities and amusements not very well suited to the sanctity and seriousness of the Christian sabbath.

Thus are these poor wretches allowed, and in some degree *obliged*, to profane the Lord's day in the grossest manner, in direct opposition to the precepts of Holy Writ, and to the positive injunction of God in the 4th commandment, where he expressly says—"Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt *do no manner of work*, thou, and thy son and thy daughter, thy *man servant, and thy maid servant*, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates."—I most earnestly intreat you, Gentlemen, to consider very seriously this *most peremptory prohibition of the Almighty*, and to contrast with it the *actual and authorised practice* of the Negro Slaves. Will you say in effect that they shall do what the great Governor of the universe says they shall *not* do? Will you continue to maintain this open warfare with Heaven, and set the authority of your Maker at defiance; or will you not rather on more mature consideration (I feel confident that you will) put an immediate stop to these violations of the day appropriated to his service, by allowing your Slaves a few hours in the week for the culture of their allotments, and by transferring the market for their commodities

dities from the Sunday to some other day of the week.

You will, I acknowledge, by this lose some little time, one day in the week, in the cultivation of your lands, but you will gain the hearts of your Slaves by this small indulgence; their gratitude to you for it will prompt them to make you full amends for this trivial loss, by redoubled diligence and exertion in their work every other day of the week. You will gain also the blessing of Heaven upon your temporal concerns, which will be of more use to you than all the labours of all your Slaves put together.

With regard to the Negro *children*, there will be no difficulty as to the article of *time* for their attendance on the parochial schools. The period for their instruction will be their very early years, before they are fit for labour, or can be of any use in the field. And even when they *are* fit for labour, you will see in the Appendix that two or three hours in the day will be fully sufficient for their attendance on the school; and all the rest of the day they may be employed on the plantations, in such work as they are capable of.

Thus will the whole of your Negro youth in a very short space of time be instructed in the principles of morality and religion, and will present to the Western world the pleasing and interesting spectacle, of a new and most numerous race of *Christians* "plucked as a brand out of the fire,"

rescued from the horrors and superstitions of Paganism; and this too in the easiest and most expeditious manner, with a very trivial expence to their owners; and that amply repaid by the substantial advantages which (as I have shewn) will accrue from it to the cultivation of their plantations.

I am aware that two obstacles will probably stand in the way of the plan proposed. The first is that most unfortunate prejudice entertained by the Planters against teaching their Negro children to *read*; which must be the foundation of all their religious instruction. They allege, that it will be extremely dangerous to give them this qualification; because it will enable them to read newspapers and pamphlets, filled with the most pernicious doctrines, hostile to all good order and good government, and inciting them to insurrection, rebellion, and disobedience to their masters. Were this the case, I should be as strenuous an enemy to the measure as any one of your respectable body can be; but the real fact is, that there cannot be a more groundless imagination than this. It is on the contrary an undoubted truth, that an ability to *read* is the very best means of preserving not only the Negroes, but all the common classes of people from being corrupted by such mischievous writings. Publications of that sort *will* find their way among them; and if they are not able to read them themselves, they may

and certainly will hear them read by others ; and then being incapable of reading any thing in confutation of them, they of course receive them as undoubted facts, and are thus easily and fatally imposed upon by wicked and designing men. Whereas if they are capable of reading what is alleged on the other side of the question, they may and probably will escape the snare that is laid for them. This was most clearly exemplified in the French revolution, and the last Irish rebellion, where by far the greatest part of those unhappy wretches who were most active and most savage in those scenes of horror, were *ignorant, stupid, uneducated men*, totally unacquainted with the use of letters, and therefore easily deceived, but not so easily *undeceived*. In England, on the contrary, where the inferior classes were generally taught to *read*, the case was quite different. The great bulk of the common people here were indeed at the first a little staggered, and for a while imposed upon by those bold licentious principles which the partisans of the French revolution, especially Thomas Paine and his disciples, propagated with so much effrontery and so much industry through this kingdom. But they soon recovered from this delirium. They saw through the wicked artifices of the abettors of anarchy and irreligion. They saw the frightful dangers that surrounded *them*, prepared to meet them with vigour, and *actually repelled them with success.*

And

And what was the occasion of this happy change? It was because the higher orders of the community could *write* and the inferior orders could *read*. It was because for more than twenty years before, upwards of 300,000 children of the poor had been religiously educated in the various charity schools, Sunday schools, and schools of industry of this kingdom, and were thus rendered capable of *reading* and comprehending those admirable discourses, sermons, and tracts of various kinds, which the ablest and most virtuous persons both among the laity and the clergy of this country were employed in composing for the lowest classes of the people, in bringing them down to the level of their understandings, and in making so forcible an appeal, not to the *ignorance* but to the *knowledge* of the inferior orders of the community, that they became sensible of the perils that surrounded them, and were rescued from destruction. These, Gentlemen, are facts which you cannot but know to be perfectly true; and after weighing them well in your mind, you will, I think, no longer entertain the slightest apprehension of *danger* from permitting your Negro children to be taught *to read*\*.

\* It has been said that *oral* instruction will be sufficient to make the Negro Slaves good Christians. It may possibly succeed with some, of good memories and a better sort of understanding. But with the bulk of dull African Negroes it will not. They require the strongest possible impressions

The other objection which may possibly impede the introduction of the *parochial schools* into the West-India islands is the idea taken up by some of the Proprietors, that by making their Negroes good Christians they make them bad Slaves ; that by admitting them to baptism, to divine worship, to the holy sacrament, and the other privileges

pressions that can be made upon their minds ; and we all know that much stronger and more permanent impressions are made by *reading* than by hearing. What the Roman poet said many centuries ago is now become almost proverbial :

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,  
Quàm quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.

But besides this, it will be of infinite use to enable the Negroes to read their Bible and Common Prayer-book at *home* as well as at church. It will find useful and proper employment for their time on the Lord's day. It will keep them from resorting to improper ways of spending it. It will be a constant fund of *amusement* to them. For the Bible, besides being the most *important*, is one of the most *entertaining* books in the world ; especially to the common people, who are in general observed to take great pleasure in reading it ; and it has been remarked by travellers, that in Scotland more particularly they are in summer evenings seen sitting at their doors on the Lord's day, and reading their Bible with apparently great attention and delight.

It should be recollected also, that in the plan here proposed, there is no intention of teaching the Negro children to *write* but only to *read* ; which will always be a strong mark of discrimination, a wall of partition, between them and the white inhabitants ; will always preserve a proper distinction and subordination between them and their superiors, and *present an insurmountable barrier against their approaching to any thing like an equality with their masters.*

leges and advantages of the Gospel, they bring them too much on a level with themselves, they raise their ideas above their condition, they inspire them with pride and ambition, render them less fit for labour, less disposed to fulfil the duties of their humble station, and less submissive and obedient to their masters.

But is it possible, or was it ever known in *fact*, that true Christianity ever produced such effects as these? It is perfectly incredible. What! can the religion of the meek and humble Jesus; that religion which above all things inculcates humility, content, patience, subordination, submission to *every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake*; can that produce ambition, pride, discontent, and resistance to lawful authority? As well might it be affirmed that the laws of England have a natural tendency to encourage despotism, tyranny, oppression, and persecution. But there is no need for *reasoning* upon the subject. Let us go to *experience and to fact*.

There are, as I have already observed, many thousands of Negro Slaves converted to Christianity in some of the British islands, especially that of Antigua; and what is the case with *them*? Are *they* by conversion rendered proud, insolent, idle, disinclined to labour, rebellious and disobedient to their masters? Quite the contrary. They so much excel all the unconverted Slaves in sobriety, industry, honesty, fidelity, submission and attachment



attachment to their masters, that every Proprietor is anxious to procure them, and, as I have before observed, will give a higher price for them than for their Heathen brethren.

And how can we wonder at this superiority over their Pagan fellow-labourers, when we recollect that the DIVINE RELIGION which they have embraced most expressly enjoins them, under pain of God's displeasure here, and of the severest punishment hereafter, "*to be subject to their masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward: to please them well in all things, not answering again; not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, with goodwill doing service as to the Lord and not to man.*"† If any one wished to form a slave exactly to his mind, could he possibly do it in terms more adapted to the purpose than these? And accordingly such effects *have* been produced on the minds and conduct of converted Negroes as might naturally be expected from them.

Having thus, I trust, effectually answered the only plausible objections which I have ever heard stated against the introduction of Christianity among the Negro Slaves, and shewn that such a measure would be no less conducive to *your* temporal advantage than to *their* eternal interests; I

† 1 Pet. ii. 18.—Tit. ii. 9. 10.—Ephes. vi. 6.—1 Coloss. iii. 22.  
should

should hope that this consideration alone would be sufficient to determine you in favour of the proposition here made to you. But you must allow me, Gentlemen, to add, that I by no means rest this great question on the ground either of private or public utility, but on much higher and nobler principles ; on the principles of justice, of humanity, of religion, of duty ; by which most sacred ties you are bound as men and as Christians, to take care of the *souls* as well as of the *bodies* of that numerous race of men, over whom you have obtained the most absolute dominion. They are yours, *the whole man*, both body and soul. They are your sole and entire property. Their welfare is placed exclusively in your hands ; their happiness or misery depends absolutely on your care of them, and by taking entire possession of them, you have made yourselves responsible for them, both here and hereafter. To you they look up as their masters, governors, guardians, and protectors ; as the guides that are to open to them the way to a better world ; and they will not, I trust, look up to you in vain. It is a debt which is strictly due to them ; an act of compassion to which they have the strongest possible claim.\*

\* There was a time when some of the West-India Proprietors, and a few persons even in this country, certainly considered the Negroes as a race of beings inferior to men,

By that very large share which the British Nation and the British Islands have, for several centuries, taken in the importation of Slaves from Africa, many thousands, many millions of innocent unoffending human beings have been torn from their native land, from every blessing that was valuable, every connexion that was dear to them, have been conveyed against their will to a country and to a people unknown to them, and without any offence or fault of theirs have been doomed TO PERPETUAL SERVITUDE, a servitude too which at their death they leave (the only inheritance they *have* to leave) entailed upon their latest posterity. These surely are sufferings which call for some compensation; and what better, what more proper compensation can there be, than that of communicating to them the blessings of the Gospel, and opening to them the reviving prospect of eternal felicity in another life, since their fate has been so unfortunate in this. This will be an act of kindness, of benevolence, of charity in its highest and sublimest form, and productive of the most extensive and substantial good. It is a boon which,  
comparatively

and as having no souls to be saved. That time is, thanks to Heaven, long since past. And if it be admitted (as it now I believe universally is) that they have immortal souls like ourselves, notwithstanding their dusky complexions and slow understandings; the arguments here urged in favour of *their religious instruction* (by means of their Proprietors) can *neither be evaded nor repelled.*

comparatively speaking, will cost *you* nothing, but to the objects of it will be invaluable.

It will be a cordial to their hearts, and a support under their toils; it will sooth their minds with all the consolations of religion; it will make even servitude itself sit light upon them, and cheer their souls with the hope of eternal freedom and felicity in another world. Instead of lessening their inclination to labour, it will increase their industry and their desire (in conformity to the commands of the religion they have embraced) *to please their masters in all things*. It will redouble their attachment to those masters, and bind them down to the performance of all their duties by the strongest ties of affection and gratitude.

Nor will *you*, Gentlemen, be without your reward, and that the highest and most gratifying that a human being can receive, the approbation of God, and the applause of the whole world.

You will have the immortal honour of founding a *new school for piety and virtue* in the bosom of the Atlantic Ocean, of erecting a noble structure of religion and morality in the Western world, of exhibiting to mankind the interesting spectacle of a very large community of truly *Christian Negroes*, and of leading the way to the salvation of more than 500,000 human beings, (immersed before in the grossest ignorance, super-

stition, wickedness, and idolatry) with all their countless descendants to the end of time.

Looking forwards, then, as I do, with some confidence to the accomplishment of this great event, it does, I confess, in some degree console and sustain my mind, amidst those frightful scenes that are now passing on every side of us, and those tremendous commotions which are convulsing to its centre almost the whole habitable globe. It will be one proof more, added to many others, of the high and exalted character of the British Nation, and of the extent and grandeur of its views, beyond those of any other nation upon earth. While one immense gigantic power is spreading ruin, devastation, and the most complicated misery over the world; subverting kingdoms, empires, and long established governments, and bursting asunder all the most sacred bonds of civil and political society; we see this small Island, not only exerting itself with vigour in its own defence, and standing up single against the torrent that is overwhelming the whole continent of Europe, but at the same time silently and quietly providing for the future happiness of the human race, by diffusing every where the Holy Scriptures, and thereby sowing the seeds of Christianity over every quarter of the globe.

I allude to the Society formed in Bengal for the translation of the Scriptures into no less than ten

Oriental languages, and the dispersion of them through the vast continent of India; and to a similar institution lately formed in this country, called the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, whose *principal* object is the version of the Scriptures into foreign languages, and the dissemination of them in Pagan and Mahometan countries. Both these societies, though but recently instituted, have made considerable progress in their benevolent undertakings.

The Asiatic Society has already translated several parts of Scripture into the Oriental languages most common in India. The two first Gospels in the Shanscrit language were to be ready by the end of the last year, 1806; and an edition of all the four Gospels in that language will be published with the Greek on the opposite page (with which it perfectly harmonizes) as soon as Greek types can be procured. In the Bengalee there is a new and admirable translation of the whole Scripture completed. In the Marhatta the four Gospels are printed off. The Orissa translation is in great forwardness. In the Persic the book of Psalms is finished. It is intended to commence the translation of the Scriptures into the Tibet, Bootan, Burmah, Assan, Malay, Orissa, Telinga, and Chinese languages, as soon as the funds of the society will enable them to undertake them.

And the very curious discoveries lately made by the indefatigable and pious Dr. Buchanan, afford

afford the best grounded hopes of all those versions being well received, and producing the best effects throughout the greatest part of the Indian peninsula.

The same success seems likely to attend the *British and Foreign Bible Society* instituted for the same purpose in England. It has already, in the short space of three years, extended its operations into almost every quarter of the globe.

It has, by its aid, produced and encouraged institutions similar to its own in Germany and Prussia. By the former of these 5000 copies of a German protestant New Testament have been printed; by the latter, an edition of the Bohemian Bible is in a course of printing for the use of the protestants in Bohemia, Berlin, and elsewhere. Two thousand copies of St. John's Gospel in the Mohawk language, have been printed in London at the society's expence, and distributed among the Mohawks on the great river, and 500 more will soon be sent to the Mohawks lower down on the river St. Lawrence. Of the Icelandic New Testament 2000 copies have been printed at Copenhagen, at the society's expence, and forwarded to Iceland. Two separate sums of £. 1,000. each have been granted by the society towards the translation of the Scriptures now going on in Bengal, into ten Oriental languages. Of these translations I have myself seen specimens. Arabic types and paper have been

been granted by the society for the purpose of printing 5000 copies of the Turkish Testament at Karass on the borders of the Caspian Sea ; an elegant specimen of this Turkish translation I have also seen. New Testaments have been sent to Ireland ; and 20,000 copies of a neat Gaelic Bible is now passing through the press. The English and Welsh Bibles are all printed under the direction of the University of Cambridge. Copies of the New Testament have also been furnished to the convicts at Woolwich ; the prisoners in Newgate, and other jails ; the German soldiers and seamen at Margate, Gosport, Guildford, Dublin, and other places ; the Sea Fencibles on the Essex coast, and the French and Spanish prisoners of war. Abroad, to the British soldiers at the Cape of Good Hope ; the inhabitants of Newfoundland, Halifax, and Nova Scotia ; the settlers at Van Dieman's Land ; the French at St. Domingo ; the Spaniards at Buenos Ayres ; the colonists of New South Wales, and to different parts of France, Switzerland, and Germany.

In short, whether the sphere of its operations be measured from north to south, that is, from Iceland to the Cape of Good Hope, and Van Dieman's Land ; or from east to west, that is, from Hindostan and the shores of the Caspian to Buenos Ayres and the lakes of North America, the range is of vast extent ; and there seems to be no other limits to the beneficial operation of  
the



the institution than the amount of its funds, which, from the constant accession of new subscribers both at home and abroad (for it is well known and highly approved in almost every part of Europe) appear, at present, to promise an abundant supply.\*

These successful exertions, under the direction of its vigilant and highly respectable President, Lord Teignmouth, have secured to the society the support and countenance of some of the most exalted characters in this kingdom ;† and it reflects the highest honour on this nation, that those who have most eminently distinguished themselves in the service of their country, have shewn an equal zeal and ardour in promoting the cause of religion and the diffusion of Christianity through every region of the globe.

To these two kindred societies we must add the recently established *African Institution* for the civilization and improvement of that vast continent, which is also supported by many of the most distinguished men of this country, though differing widely in their political and religious sentiments ; and which, though its immediate object is not the introduction of Christianity into

\* See the Third Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

† The Archbishop of Cashel, Lord Barham, and Lord Gambier, have recently been added to the list of its Vice Presidents.

Africa, yet if it should succeed in its primary view, the civilization of the natives will undoubtedly lead in the end to their conversion.

If to these noble efforts for the dissemination of the Gospel in Europe, Asia, and Africa, *you*, Gentlemen, will have the goodness to add your assistance towards introducing it among your Negro Slaves in the West-India Islands, there will then be a foundation laid for the establishment of Christianity in *every quarter of the globe*. You will, I think, feel a generous pride in following the example of every other branch of the British Empire, and in concurring with them in the comprehensive and noble plan which they have adopted.

These are truly *Imperial works*, and worthy of the British name. These will immortalize it to the latest posterity, and distinguish it most honourably from every other nation in the world.

Let these, then, be the characteristic features of the English Nation. Let the great Enemy of the repose and comfort of mankind, place his glory in *universal dominion*; let Britain place it in *universal benevolence*; and while *he* is subjugating the world by his arms, let Britain be employed in repelling him from her own coasts, in assisting and protecting the distressed, and in meliorating the condition of distant countries, by communicating to them in various ways, the

blessings of the Christian Revelation. The final  
 result of all this is in the hands of the Almighty.  
 But whatever that may be, whatever future cala-  
 mities may await us, we shall have the consolation  
 of having discharged our duty, *in this instance at  
 least*, as Men and as Christians. And we may  
 reasonably hope that such a conduct will have its  
 due weight in recommending us and our cause to  
 the favour of Heaven, and in obtaining for us the  
 protection of that gracious Providence, which has  
 hitherto preserved us amidst the dissolution of  
 kingdoms, and the wreck of empires, and has  
 rescued us from dangers not less formidable,  
 in my apprehension, than even those which now  
 apparently surround us.

I am, Gentlemen,  
 with very sincere regard,  
 Your faithful and affectionate  
 Friend and Servant,

Fulham House,  
 Jan. 1st, 1808.

B. LONDON.

## POSTSCRIPT.

IN the preceding Letter I thought it necessary to point out a mode of providing a Fund for the support of the Parochial Schools, which will, I trust, be established in the West-India Islands; but at the same time I stated, that the expence to the Planters themselves would be *very trivial*. It now appears, from the subjoined Appendix, that it will be *far more trivial* than I at first imagined; for I went upon a supposition that it was necessary for the Parochial Schools to be *Week-day* Schools. But Dr. Bell (the original author of such Schools on the new system) is, as you will see in the Appendix, decidedly of opinion, that *Sunday Schools*, well conducted, will fully answer the purpose of instructing the Negro Children both in reading and in religion. This makes a most material alteration in the state of the case. It cuts off at once the only two specious objections that *can* be made by the West-India Gentlemen, against the establishment of such schools in their respective parishes; namely, the expence of maintaining them, and the loss of the Children's labour to the Planters. For the

expencc, as Dr. Bell states it, will be reduced to a mere nothing, a sum below all notice ; and as SUNDAY (when there is no work on the plantation) will be the *only day* for instruction, there will be no diminution of the usual labour of the Negro Children, and, consequently, not the slightest loss to their Masters.

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## A P P E N D I X:

CONTAINING

A SHORT SKETCH

OF THE

NEW SYSTEM OF EDUCATION  
FOR THE POOR;

In a Letter from the Rev. Dr. BELL (the Inventor of that  
System) to the LORD BISHOP of LONDON.

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Parsonage-House, Swanage,  
Dec. 21, 1807.

MY LORD,

TO obey the commands, with which you have been pleased to honour me, must needs be as much my inclination as it is my duty. In discharge of this duty, it would ill become me to enlarge on the plan, so happily suggested by your Lordship, to diffuse the blessings of Christianity among a race of our fellow creatures, who are in a peculiar degree entitled to the consolations in this life, which Religion can alone supply. There are no other means now left, adequate to this end, than those which you have proposed and recommended to the British West-India Islands. These silent and gradual means of Religious Education can scarce fail of ultimate success. It is not what a few select spirits may have done, or may still do, for the diffusion of the Gospel in foreign regions, which is to produce extensive and permanent effects. It is what any one may be enabled to do for himself, and for those

those about him, which is to pour into every bosom the blessed comforts of our holy religion.

If, in performing the task assigned to me, I shall, under your sanction, contribute my mite to this great and good design formed by your Lordship, it will prove a new source of comfort to me under the difficulties I have encountered, and the years of toil which I have spent in contriving, demonstrating, maturing, and digesting a system of Education, singularly adapted to the religious instruction of those to whom your Lordship has extended your paternal care and Protection. This fitness of the system to the condition of the Negro Children in the West-India Islands, will appear manifest as I go along ; and I shall therefore, without further preface, proceed to draw up, as required, a short account of my new system of Education for the Poor.

This method of practical tuition, which has appeared under different shapes in this country, originated in the Military Male Orphan Asylum, founded at Madras in the year 1789. There it gradually grew to maturity, and, after the experience of several years, was established in all its forms in that school. Thence it was transplanted into England in the year 1797, when it was partially adopted with good success in the oldest charity school in London, that of Aldgate, and in several parts of the kingdom, and is now established at the parochial schools of Whitechapel, and of Lambeth, and at the Royal Military Asylum, Chelsea.

This system rests on the *simple principle of tuition by the Scholars themselves*. It is its distinguishing characteristic, that the school, how numerous soever, is solely taught by the Pupils of the institution, under a *single Master*, who, if able and diligent, could, without difficulty,

difficulty, *conduct ten contiguous schools, each consisting of a thousand scholars.*

In addition to this general principle, and independent of it, the Madras School furnishes certain individual practices, or helps, in the art of tuition, by which it's Pupils are initiated into the elementary processes of Reading and Spelling, to say nothing here of Writing and Arithmetic.

For the guidance of those who may be desirous of conducting Education on this principle, adapted in a peculiar manner to large schools for the lower orders of youth, and according to these practices (see p. 41.) which are alike applicable to private tuition, and schools of every description, the following instructions, chiefly extracted from the "*Analysis of the Experiment in Education made at Madras,*" will, it is hoped, suffice.

1. The Asylum, like every well-regulated school, is arranged into forms or classes, each composed of as many scholars as, having made similar proficiency, unite together.

The scholar ever finds his own level not only in his class, but also in the ranks of the school, being promoted or degraded from place to place, or class to class, according to his proficiency.

2. Each class is paired off into tutors and pupils. The Tutor sits by the side of his Pupil, and assists him in getting their common lesson.

3. To each class is attached an *Assistant Teacher*, whose sole business it is to attend his class, to prevent idleness, to instruct and help the Tutors in learning their lesson, and teaching their Pupils, and to hear the class, as soon as prepared, say their lesson under

4. The *Teacher*, who has charge of the class, directs and guides his Assistant, intends him in hear-  
ing



ing the class, or himself hears both the Assistant and Scholars say their lesson; and is responsible for the order, behaviour, diligence, and improvement of the class.

5. *A Sub-usher and Usher* are appointed to inspect the school, to watch over the whole, and give their instructions and assistance wherever wanted, as the agents and ministers of

6. *The Schoolmaster*, whose province it is to direct and conduct the system in all its ramifications; and to see the various offices of Usher, Sub-usher, Teacher, Assistants, Tutors, and Pupils, carried into effect.— From his place (chair or desk) he overlooks the whole school, and gives life and motion to every member of it. He inspects the classes, one by one; and is occupied wherever there is most occasion for his services, and where they will best tell. He is to encourage the diffident, the timid, and the backward; to check and repress the forward and presumptuous; to bestow just and ample commendation upon the diligent, attentive, and orderly, however dull their capacity, or slow their progress; to stimulate the ambitious, rouse the indolent, and make the idle bestir themselves; in short, to deal out praise and displeasure, encouragement and threatening, according to the temper, disposition, and genius of the scholar. He is occasionally to hear and instruct the classes, or rather to overlook and direct the Teachers and Assistants while they do so.

7. Last of all comes the *Superintendent, or Trustees, or Visitor or Chaplain, or parochial Minister*, whose scrutinizing eye must pervade the whole machine, whose active mind must give it energy, and whose unbiassed judgment must inspire confidence, and  
maintain

maintain the general order and harmony of the system.

For this purpose there is kept by the Usher, Teachers, or others equal to the office,

8. A Register of the daily tasks performed ; and by the Schoolmaster,

9. A Register of daily offences, or *Black Book*, to be expurgated weekly by

10. A Jury of twelve or more boys, selected for the purpose.

To this sketch of the Madras system, I do not here subjoin, as I had proposed at the outset, an exposition of the *practices* alluded to above, namely, the processes of teaching the alphabet in *sand*, of syllabic reading and unreiterated spelling, &c. &c. as they would occupy too much of the space allotted to this letter.

Having thus briefly detailed the principal outlines of the Madras system of education, I proceed, as enjoined, to state some of the peculiar advantages of this method of educating and instructing the lower classes of the people.

The simple contrivance of *daily reports* is admirably fitted to correct idleness and detect negligence in their origin, and to bear permanent testimony to merit and demerit, even if overlooked in passing.

*The Black Book* too is a simple and effectual instrument in maintaining order, diligence, good conduct, and the most rigid discipline, *at the least expence of punishment* ; of which it is a main point to be frugal, and a good economist.

It is the boast of this system, that, by the perpetual presence and intervention of our little Masters, as well out of as in school, it not only detects, convicts, and corrects the offender, but for the most part prevents

the offence. It gives, as it were, to the Master the hundred hands of Briareus, the hundred eyes of Argus, and the wings of Mercury.

Its utility is still further to be estimated by the civility, the decorum, *the regard to good order and good government, which it inculcates and exemplifies*; while, by the various offices performed in the different departments of the school, it prepares its disciples *for business*; and instructs them to act their part and perform their duty in future life with punctuality, diligence, impartiality and justice; and also cultivates the best dispositions of the heart, by *teaching the children to take an early and well-directed interest in the welfare of one another.*

By these means a few good boys selected for the purpose (and changed as often as occasion requires) who have no other occupation, no other pursuit, nothing to call forth their attention, but this single object (and whose minds you can lead and command at pleasure) form the whole school, teach the scholars to think rightly, and, mixing in all their little amusements and diversions, *secure them against the contagion of ill example; and by seeing that they treat one another kindly, render them contented and happy in their condition.*

To all this may be added the following important advantages resulting from the new system of education, as expressed by the Trustees of the Parochial Schools at Whitechapel, in their printed report of April 7, 1807.

“ 1st. It completely fixes and secures the attention of every scholar; the indolent are stimulated, the vicious reclaimed, and it nearly annihilates bad behaviour of every sort.

“ 2. The children make a *regular* progress in their learning,

learning, which is daily noted and registered, no lesson being passed over till it be correctly studied.

“ 3. It saves the expence of additional Instructors ; the eye of one intelligent Master or Mistress alone being required to see that their agents, the senior good boys and girls, do their duty in teaching their juniors.

“ 4. It not only possesses excellent mechanical advantages, in communicating instruction generally ; but it is particularly adapted to instil into, and fix practically in the mind, *the principles of our holy religion* ; whilst it materially secures the moral conduct of the children both in and out of school ; and,

“ 5. By economizing time (hitherto so lamentably wasted in many schools conducted on the old plan) it affords an ample and very inviting opportunity of adding to the ordinary establishment, a School of Industry.”

In a word, like the steam-engine, or spinning machinery, it diminishes labour and multiplies work ; but in a degree which does not admit of the same limits, and scarcely of the same calculation as they do ; for, unlike the mechanical powers, this intellectual and moral engine, the more work it has to perform, the greater is the facility and expedition with which it is performed, and the higher is the degree of perfection to which it is carried.

Such are the advantages of conducting a school on the scheme of the Asylum at Madras.

It is almost unnecessary to add, that all the facilities of this system apply alike to the first principles of moral and religious instruction as to the rudiments of reading and spelling. The Teachers, by instructing the scholars in the Catechism and other religious exercises, leave only to the Master or Superintendant the easy

charge of solemn examination, and of explaining to the Teachers what *they* are to explain to the rest of the school.

After what has been here stated, it cannot fail to be observed how suitable the Madras system of education is to the condition of *the Negro Children in the West-India Islands, and the proposed Schools of 1000 children each.*

1st. Because one Master suffices for each School, however numerous.

2. Because, by its means, I am of opinion that *Sunday alone* will suffice for their education, and no time be lost to their daily labour. I am often told by parents, that their children improve more on the Sunday, where the school is conducted on the Madras system, than during the whole week in the schools not so conducted.

3. Because, from among the Book-keepers, or other Europeans or Natives in the employment of the Planters, may be selected Schoolmasters, *without any interference with, or interruption of their weekly occupations;* and thus the expence of importing and maintaining a new race of men, a body of Schoolmasters, will be saved. In the first instance, Book-keepers qualified for the introduction of this system may, I imagine, be readily obtained in the Charity Schools of London, where it is established; or Book-keepers hereafter engaged in this country, may for a few weeks (four will suffice) previous to their sailing, attend these schools free of expence. Such I know to be the liberal and christian spirit of the Managers of these schools, that they will rejoice in an occasion of promoting the grand object which your Lordship has in contemplation.

4. Because, by its registers and reports, it falls, at *a very small expence of time and trouble, under the inspection,*

*inspection, direction, and control of the Parochial Clergy*, should your Lordship so choose; and thus will cost nothing for *that*, without which any system is of small avail, viz. *faithful, able, and professional superintendence*.

I now proceed to answer in order, the questions you was pleased to put to me. Your Lordship asks 1st, What is the earliest age at which children are in general capable of learning to read by this method?

I answer in general, that *no age is too early*. As soon as children can articulate, they may be taught to pronounce the letters, the printed characters of which they are afterwards to distinguish by the eye, and form with the finger. But into the proposed schools, if within due distance, they may enter at *four*, (children are more forward in warm than in cold climates) which is the age of admission into the Madras Asylum.

2. In what time will they be sufficiently instructed in reading, and in learning the principles of morality and religion in these schools?

I answer in the words of the records of the Male Asylum at Madras, when that institution was only of half a dozen years standing:

“ John Friskin, a Teacher of twelve years and eight months old, with his Assistants of seven, eight, nine, and eleven years of age, has taught boys of four, five, and six years, to read distinctly and spell every word accurately as they go along, who were only initiated into the mysteries of their A B C eight months before.”

3. What the expence of each child will be upon an average, including books, the salaries of the Masters, and every other article of expence, and supposing the number in each parochial school to be about a thousand?

I know

I know of no article of annual expence, except the salary of the Schoolmaster, and the purchase of books.

With regard to the first, if the school be a Sunday school (which I apprehend will answer the purpose,) we give here five guineas a year to the Schoolmaster. Let it be for the West Indies, £.25 sterling per ann.; this in a school for a thousand is only sixpence sterling for each child per ann.

The expence for books in such a school, will be about the same sum of £.25 per ann. that is, as before, sixpence sterling a year for each child. †

But if the Planters should prefer a week-day school for their Negro Children, and would consider £.50 a year as an equivalent for their Book-keeper's services one hour a day, or as an ample salary to *any* qualified person whom they may employ as Schoolmaster for one hour a day, the expence for each child would then be one shilling sterling per ann.; and sixpence sterling (as before) for books. But I must again repeat, that from the long experience I have had, both at Madras and in this country, in teaching the children of the poor according to my new system of education, I am perfectly convinced that a *Sunday school* will be fully sufficient for instructing the Negro Children in reading, and for furnishing their minds with the soundest principles of morality and religion.

4. How many hours in each day must the children be in the school? and,

Whether they may during the rest of the day be employed in such work as they are capable of?

My answer is, that if it be only a Sunday school, I

† This expence is stated at about double the amount of the price of books necessary for a school of a thousand Negro Children, on an average of eight years.

should think *two* hours early in the morning before Divine Service, and *one* after evening Service, would be sufficient, that the poor children may have the remainder of the day for rest and innocent recreation.

If it be a week-day school, one hour every day in the school will be sufficient; and the rest of the day may be given up to the work of the plantations, or any other of which the Negro Children are capable.

I cannot conclude this long letter, which the time does not allow me to shorten, without observing, that on every point which is new to me, and which relates to the state of the West Indies, or requires a local knowledge of these Islands, I would be understood to speak with great diffidence and all deference to those who possess this local knowledge, and who are deeply interested in the instruction and good conduct of their Negroes; which I do verily believe is best to be effected by the means pointed out by your Lordship. From all my brethren who have done me the honour to write to me concerning the effects of the Madras system in their parishes, I have uniformly heard of the improvement in the general behaviour of the children, as well as in their learning; of both of which I have a conspicuous example before my eyes in this parish.

In a word, nothing in my opinion was ever better calculated to promote *the great cause of morality and religion, as well as the temporal interests of the West-India Planters*, than the work in which you are now engaged. The measure planned by your Lordship was alone wanting to crown the long and successful struggle which you have made in the cause of suffering humanity; and the time will come, when this measure, formed for the completion of your great design, will also succeed. Flowing from the pure  
sources



sources of Christianity, dictated by a sound and enlarged policy, directed to the true interests of humanity, and accompanied by means adequate (with God's blessing) to the end, sooner or later *it will assuredly succeed*. The time will come, and, I would fain hope, is already arrived, when, of the West-India Merchants and Planters, the enlightened from motives of policy, the liberal and merciful from a sentiment of honour and humanity, and the religious and virtuous from a principle of Christian charity and duty, will second your Lordship's views; and, so supported, who will be found to oppose them! If the humble system of education, which was founded and reared in the Eastern world, and thence imported into Europe, be now, by your Lordship's exertions, happily transferred to the Western world; and should it, in the one Indies, prove as instrumental in promoting the benevolent purposes which your Lordship has so much at heart, as it has been in the other in promoting the views of the Honourable East-India Directors, and the Government of Madras, I shall think that I have not lived in vain.

That your Lordship's invaluable life may long be spared to the church and to the world, is my most fervent prayer.

I have the honour to be,

With sentiments of perfect esteem and veneration,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's dutiful and  
devoted Servant,

A. BELL.

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